

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DOHA 00204 151314Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
-----151316Z 047652 /53

O 151240Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2319
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T DOHA 0204

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO
SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, QA, US
SUBJECT: AMIR OF QATAR EXPRESSES INTEREST IN F-5'S

REF: 76 DOHA 862, 76 DOHA 968, 76 STATE 220256

1. DURING FEB 15 CONVERSATION, AMIR OF QATAR, SHAYKH KHALIFA BIN HAMAD AL THANI, RAISED WITH ME HIS INTEREST IN F-5 AIRCRAFT. KHALIFA NOTED THAT QATARI AIR FORCE'S HAWKER HUNTERS WERE OBSOLETE AND F-5'S APPEARED TO BE SUITABLE REPLACEMENT. AMIR SPOKE IN TERMS OF NEED FOR "ABOUT 15" AIRCRAFT. HE SAID QATARIS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH F-5'S THEY HAD SEEN IN SAUDI ARABIA AND JORDAN. HE INDICATED GOQ HAD ALSO BEEN LOOKING AT FRENCH AIRCRAFT.

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2. IN RESPONDING, I RECALLED PREVIOUS EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN F-5'S BY SHAYKH HAMAD BIN KHALIFA AL THANI, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF QATARI ARMED FORCES (AND AMIR'S SON) IN AUGUST 1976. (REFTELS). I TOLD AMIR THAT WE HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO RESPOND AS YET TO SHAYKH HAMAD'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON F-5'S. I OUTLINED FOR KHALIFA CURRENT US ARMS POLICY OF NOT RPT NOT SELLING SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT TO LOWER GULF STATES. I

OBSERVED THAT NEW ADMINISTRATION WAS INTENSELY CONCERNED AT LEVEL OF US ARMS SALES; PARTICULARLY IN THIS AREA, AND QUESTION CURRENTLY UNDER STUDY IN WASHINGTON. I SAID THAT SUBJECT COULD BE DISCUSSED AT AREA COM'S MEETING WITH SECRETARY IN RIYADH AND PERHAPS AFTER THIS I WOULD BE ABLE TO SAY MORE ON SUBJECT.

3. KHALIFA SPECIFIED THAT HIS RAISING SUBJECT WAS NOT RPT NOT TO BE CONSIDERED AN "OFFICIAL REQUEST" FOR SALE OF F-5'S TO GOQ, BUT RATHER A "DECLARATION OF INTEREST" IN PURCHASING SUCH AIRCRAFT. HE ASSURED ME THAT GOQ HAD NO RPT NO INTENTION OF BUILDING UP "OFFENSIVE STRIKE FORCE", BUT IT WAS SIMPLY A MATTER OF TURNING IN OLD MODELS FOR NEW. HE REMARKED THAT HE COULD PROBABLY OBTAIN AIRCRAFT FROM FRENCH, BUT F-5 APPEARED TO BE IDEAL AIRCRAFT FOR QATAR.

4. COMMENT: I EXPECT THAT SALES OF ARMS TO LOWER GULF STATES WILL BE DISCUSSED AT COM MEETING. WE HAVE NEVER ENCOURAGED QATARIS TO SEEK ARMS FROM U.S. SOURCES. HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT QATARI ATTITUDE TOWARD MUR POSSIBLE REFUSAL TO SUPPLY F-5'S OR OTHER SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT TO THIS COUNTRY WILL BE CONDITIONED BY WHAT WE DO IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY BAHRAIN AND UAE.
PAGANELLI

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MILITARY SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 15-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977DOHA00204
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770053-0674
Format: TEL
From: DOHA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770242/aaaabkpw.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4346cec6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 DOHA 862, 76 DOHA 968, 76 STATE 220256
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3322765
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMIR OF QATAR EXPRESSES INTEREST IN F-5'S
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, QA, US, (THANI, KHALIFA IBN HAMAD AL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4346cec6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009